

REMARKS

The Office action has been carefully considered. The drawings were objected to for various informalities. Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Schaefer, U.S. Patent No. 3,680,704 (hereinafter "Schaefer"). Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bernhardt, U.S. Patent No. 5,318,698 (hereinafter "Bernhardt").

By present amendment, the specification has been amended to correct some clerical errors and claims 1 and 14 have been amended. No claims have been added or canceled. Claims 1-31 remain pending.

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 6-13 and 17-31 and for indicating that claims 15 and 16 include allowable subject matter.

The Office action objected to various figures for including reference characters that were not mentioned in the specification. In response, applicants have amended the specification to include the omitted reference characters.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the gas injected into the second containment region is injected at a rate to cause the fluid in the second containment region to rise higher than the inlet of the first containment region that receives fluid. This is clearly shown by various figures of Applicants' application (see, e.g., figures 3, 5, 6A, 6B). The fluid in the containment region 12 of Schaefer, on the other hand, does not rise higher than the inlet 24 of the first containment region 14 of Schaefer (see figure 1 and column 2, lines 20-22 of Schaefer).

Applicants respectfully submit that at least for this reason, claim 1 and the claims that depend thereon are patentable over Schaefer.

Claim 14 has been amended to recite that the convection flow causes fluid within the first housing to be drawn downwards. Bernhardt, on the other hand, does not cause fluid within any of the housings to be drawn downward (see, e.g., figure 1 of Bernhardt), and certainly does not do so by dispersing a gas into a second housing to create a convection flow as recited in claim 14. Applicants respectfully submit that at least for this reason, claim 14 and the claims that depend thereon are patentable over Bernhardt.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-31 are patentable over the prior art of record, and that the application is good and proper form for allowance. A favorable action on the part of the Examiner is earnestly solicited.

If in the opinion of the Examiner a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (425) 467-5686.

Respectfully submitted,



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